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*THE GERMAN LYRIC.* By John Lees, M.A., D.Litt., Lecturer in the University of Aberdeen. Dent & Sons, London and Toronto. 1914. (Dutton, New York)

It is inevitable that an author who treats the subject of lyric poetry should open his discussion with a chapter of definitions. This task is accomplished by Mr. Lees with ease and success. While he has contributed nothing original to the question, he has stated clearly and compactly what the recognized characteristics of the lyric are. Wisely enough he sets up no criterion, uses no Procrustean methods himself; rather he warns against extreme views, such as those of Hebbel and Dilthey, and their disciple Witkop. The lyric is of many kinds, whereas these critics recognize but one, that of the highly subjective sort, based on personal experience. In the matter of the outer form too, he is against any rule-of-thumb judgment, and submits the ideal if not always practical test: "*Is the final product a success?*" The poet who adapts his sense to his form, or vice versa, who can combine these two into a harmonious whole, has solved the question of form. Not that the form is of small importance. On the contrary he points out that the rhythm and grace of a lyric are often the reason for its charm.

In the latter half of this same pithy chapter the author undertakes to show the trend of the German lyric past and present. The modern poet differs in one important respect from his mediæval prototype: he is not responsible for the musical accompaniment to his poem. There is no reason to believe that the modern lyric has suffered in musical quality from this separation from the harp accompaniment. This accompaniment made up for certain limitations under which the older poets labored: when the metre and length of a poem were prescribed, the manner of delivery was all the more important. Mr. Lees says with reason that a more ideal connection between the two arts exists today when a master poet writes a poem and a master composer sets it to music.

A still more vital development is the fact that the greater range and freedom of the modern poet in subject and form has made for a more individualized type of lyric. Not only has interest in *classes* of poetry—Kirchenlied, Minnesang, Volkslied—as such, waned, but the personality of the poet has become of ever increasing interest, an interest abetted by the greater amount of biographical data available in the case of the moderns. Be it said in passing that Mr. Lees finds the tendency to individualization more natural among the Germans than, for instance, among the English. The geographical and, till recent years, the political conditions have made many peoples of the inhabitants of Germany. "This is why

there have been so few so-called schools of poetry in Germany; and none of them has ever been national or has dominated literature so powerfully as to cramp the individual in the expression of his personal experience. From first to last there has been a healthy development of style, free from the mere slavish imitation of tradition or fashion." The author's point is not altogether well taken. He fails to state that the absence of a strong centralized political life made German writers turn to other countries for their models, and that foreign traditions were followed slavishly and with more detriment than that which arises from schools of poetry.

The real theme of the book is a rigidly historical account of the development of the German lyric. There is a sufficient amount of biographical material, but in the limited compass of two hundred and fifty pages there is little room for a discussion of æsthetical matters, and Mr. Lees does not wander far from the cold facts at any time, nor can he be accused of theorizing. One will also look in vain for any characterization of even the outstanding currents or movements of literature. There is no adequate discussion of the *Sturm und Drang* poetry, and the inception of the Romantic lyric is dismissed in a page or two. Despite these limitations, however, his book presents the only practical treatment of the whole field that we have and should be welcomed accordingly.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, many authors get nothing more than honorable mention—the book would be tedious if this were not so. But any poet worth while is accorded an analysis and criticism which leaves the reader with a definite impression. It is to be regretted that the scope of the work would not allow more of this in some cases. In the Middle High German period, for instance, the only poet for whom the author shows any appreciation is Walther von der Vogelweide. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are, possibly with better reason, briefly treated. Here again one could wish that the author had given more consideration to the beginning of the sonnet in Germany. As it is, it is mentioned here without any comment, nor is the sonnet discussed in any of the succeeding chapters.

The nineteenth century bulks largest in the author's attention if not interest: the discussion of it comprises more than half the book. Perhaps this portion of the work was the original nucleus from which the book has grown. At any rate we must not forget that the nineteenth century ranks second to none in the voluminousness of its literary output. There has been an ever increasing flood of lyric poetry, most of it good and some of it of a very high order.

It must certainly be said that Mr. Lees unfailingly puts his emphasis on the better things. He shows taste in his criticisms.

<sup>1</sup> In this connection he it said that the book has no index except a register of names. This lack, which militates against its use as a handbook, should certainly be supplied in any later edition.

His language is choice and clear. The tone of his work is appreciative. Furthermore, he has succeeded in putting himself into the German atmosphere, a thing absolutely necessary for understanding and interpreting a form of literature so subjective as the lyric.

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*SOME PARALLEL FORMATIONS IN ENGLISH*, by Francis A. Wood. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. (Hesperia, Ergänzungsreihe: Schriften zur englischen Philologie, herausgegeben von Hermann Collitz und James W. Bright, 1. Heft.)

*ZUR GESCHICHTE DER GERMANISCHEN N-DEKLINATION*. Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde einer Hohen Philosophischen Fakultät der Kgl. Universität Uppsala vorgelegt von Elias Wessén. Uppsala 1914, Akademische Buchdruckerei, Edv. Berling.

*NOMINA AGENTIS IN OLD ENGLISH, PART I*. Inaugural Dissertation by Karl Kärre . . . . . for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Upsala 1915, printed at the University Press, Edv. Berling.

*THE SEMANTIC DEVELOPMENT OF WORDS FOR EATING AND DRINKING IN GERMANIC*, by H. O. Schwabe. (Linguistic Studies in Germanic, edited by Francis A. Wood, No. 1.) The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois (1915).

Professor Wood's monograph deals with *k*-formations and *p*-formations in English. The examples in each of these two groups are divided according to their earliest occurrence in Old English, Middle English or Modern English, those under each head being given in alphabetical order. The material makes it plain that *-ock* (e. g., *bullock*, *hassock*) "was, perhaps we may say is, a living suffix in provincial English," and that to a lesser degree the same is true of *-up* (e. g., *hiccup*, *wallop*), which often occurs as a parallel of *-ock* (*hiccup*:*hickock*). With each example Wood cites the words without the suffix that may be supposed to have underlain the formation.

The presentation of the material is encumbered and the result obscured by the inclusion of words like E. *black*, *yoke*, *warp*, which from the English or even the general Germanic point of view, have nothing to do with the types *hassock* and *hiccup*. The fact that by the side of these words there are, either in Gic. or in some other Indo-European language, others without the final velar or labial (e. g., E. *yoke*, Sk. *yugám*: Sk. *yuváti* 'bindet an, spannt an') is